SHENKEL HAPPENINGS – NOVEMBER 2026

Greetings, Shenkel Friends and Family!

It's November, and you know what that means: turkey, stretchy pants, football for those of us watching the Eagles crash and burn, and a reminder to be grateful for every part of our complicated lives. As a friend recently reminded me, "Everyone has something." Truth. Big or little, problems are part of life. It's what we do when we're faced with them that determines how well we live.

Recognizing all those not-so-perfect parts of your life, I invite you to focus on all the things that are going right. Making a list often helps to bring that attitude front and center. So let me get you started:

- I am grateful for that first cup of coffee in the morning.
- I am grateful that all of my basic needs of food and shelter and a nice comfy bed are being met.
- I am grateful for my incredible family and each of their unique gifts. I love them beyond words.
- I am grateful for good health.
- I am grateful for friends who I can count on for laughter and support.
- I am grateful for our Shenkel Family. We've got each other's backs!
- And I'm grateful that no matter what, if I'm open and paying attention to experiencing God, God shows up: in a feeling of all encompassing love, in the words of others, in something I read that is exactly what I needed to hear. God is in and around me, and I am blessed. And you are, too.

Now, let's see what is happening at your church!

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- **REFLECTIVE SERVICE at 8:30 AM** – A good choice if you prefer no music and time for discussion and reflection, and
- **TRADITIONAL-ISH SERVICE at 9:45 AM** – You'll find everything you've always wanted in a traditional service**!**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **MARTINMAS LANTERN WALK** – The New Earth Traditions Homeschool group that has been enjoying renting the space at Shenkel is extending an invite to all Shenkel families to welcome us to their "Martinmas Lantern Walk," a festival of generosity and light, and potluck on Friday, November 13 from 4:00-6:00 PM outdoors in the pavilion and labyrinth. No RSVP needed and ALL ARE WELCOME! (Check your Thursday, 11/6 email for more detailed information.)

- **NOVEMBER 15 THRU DECEMBER 12 – SHENKEL'S GIVING TREE TO SUPPORT BETHANY CHILDREN'S HOME –** Here is your chance to make a child's Christmas a happy one! Starting Sunday, November 15, a Christmas tree will be in the narthex with paper ornaments labeled with various gift card options. Take one or more of the ornaments of your choosing and purchase the gift card named, in the $15-$50 range, and return as gifts (unwrapped) for Bethany Children's Home. These cards are the easiest way for Shenkel to be actively involved in helping to create new, positive memories in the lives of the youth at Bethany Children's Home. Cards will be collected through Sunday, December 13.

- **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22 at 5:30 PM – ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SOUP SUPPER WITH TEMPLE UMC** – Gather with your Shenkel and Temple UMC friends for good food and conversation! **Please sign up in the narthex** to bring soup or bread or dessert and indicate the number of people in your party. Hope you'll join us for this low-key, fun and delicious gathering focused on gratitude.

- **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28 AT 10:00 AM – DECORATE THE SANCTUARY AND SOCIAL HALL –** It's time! Come out and help us decorate for the Advent/Christmas season. Many hands make light work, and we need your hands and Christmas spirit!

- ***TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 4:00-8:00 PM -GIOVANNI'S FUNDRAISER FOR SHENKEL—**Take a break from the holiday rush and support Shenkel at the same time at Giovanni's Pizza and Italian Restaurant, 1492 E. Schuylkill Road, Pottstown, PA 19465!! Dine-in, take out, or order online Tuesday, December 8, between 4:00 and 8:00 PM, and Shenkel will receive a portion of the sale. For dine-in and carry out, you MUST mention that you are supporting Shenkel UCC, and MUST indicate this in notes section of online orders. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors—anyone can participate. Pick up advertising fliers in the narthex. **PLEASE NOTE: offer applies to RESTAURANT ONLY. Does NOT include Giovanni's Express.

- **JANUARY 9, 2027 – NEW YEAR REBOOT -** Plans are in the works for another ever-popular January Reboot presented by the Stewardship Committee. Look for details in December. It's going to be another good one!

- **JANUARY 10 – 12th NIGHT FESTIVAL –** You are invited to join Shenkel friends in attending a 12th Night Festival in Allentown. This is a traditional celebration of the 12th Day of Christmas, in the style of a medieval banquet. (No actual food, it's more of a pageant.)

We will be carpooling from Shenkel at 11:30 a.m. in time to get to the 1 p.m. show in Allentown at Christ Lutheran Church. It's a fascinating and enriching program. You can read more about it here: https://www.christ-atown.org/twelfth-night-festival
Suggested donation is $15 per person. We should reserve seats ahead of time, it is a very popular event.
If you are interested, please let Susan Royer know as soon as possible!

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS!

Our sanctuary decorated with poinsettias is a beautiful sight to behold during the Advent season! Help us fill the sanctuary by ordering yours from Tootie and Louise. The cost is $12.00 per pot, and they need a preliminary count by November 29. Final count due December 6th. Thank you!

THIRD ANNUAL CAROL LYKENS FILL-THE-HAT CHALLENGE

The third of our five-year challenge is underway! Each year, we have been using $5,000 of Carol's generous bequest to help fund our current budget deficit. Here is your challenge: From **now thru December 31, 2026,** we encourage you to make an additional Fill-the Hat Challenge donation to the Current Fund beyond your usual giving. Our goal is to match Carol's bequest of $5,000. This will help us meet our budget at the end of the year, which is currently underfunded. Each year we've hit the mark and then some! Good job! Please give what you can and generously if you are able. Make checks payable to Shenkel UCC and in the memo line write "Carol Challenge." If you are making an online donation, you'll find it on our website. As of November 10, we have met **$2,570 of our $5,000 goal!**

PROPERTY FUND – VERY IMPORTANT REQUEST!

We have a highly competent, generous, and incredibly hard-working head of our Property Committee in Kim Yocom (and FYI she is a committee of one), but there is only so much she can do. Between the continuing need for repairs at the church, parsonage, and pavilion and the need to hire workers to get the work done, our Property Fund is depleted. As of the end of September, it was in the negative to the tune of $11,000. So please, give generously to replenish this necessary fund! (Mark the Property Fund line on your envelopes or put a check in a separate envelope and mark it Property Fund to make sure you money goes to the right place. You can also donate through the website.) Thank you!

THANK YOU!!! – Speaking of Kim Yocom, we need to give a HUGE THANK YOU to her for the many hours (last month it was an eye-popping 100!) Kim is putting in to the

enormous task of keeping things functioning at our church. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Kim!!!

CHURCH SCHOOL

God is Love! Calling all children ages 3 through 6th grade! Join us for a time of faith, fun, and friendship! Each week, we will learn songs, read well-known children's books and tie them into how they show God's love, do a craft, and have a snack. Your child will meet new friends and learn how to incorporate the kindness of God into their daily lives. We meet the **THIRD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM.**

CONSISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

Approved a Sanatoga Water Conditioning job to improve the water condition in

the church;

- Approved the installation of a second phone line for our alarm system as required

by North Coventry Township;

- Reviewed the first draft of the proposed 2027 Current Fund Budget

- Set Sunday, December 20, as the date for a Congregational Meeting to approve

the 2027 Current Fund and OCWM Budgets

- Approved the use of a once-monthly use of Fellowship Hall for a new Girl Scout

Troop

LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT – FROM REV. PAM McSHANE

Until the Dawn: Actions for the Work of Advent

Advent/Christmas at Shenkel 2026

"Every Advent, we light candles and speak of hope. We wait for the good news that God is born. We prepare with pageants and presents. Yet, in the midst of our busy waiting, we know all too well that the world is not as it should be. Wars rage on, violence persists, new tragedies unfold. God's promises are real, and God's promised day has not yet come. This tension keeps us yearning—for a new day, a new way, a world made new."

During Advent at Shenkel this year, we will focus on the actions we can take as we move through the night with hope for tomorrow. Using materials provided by Sanctified Art, we will journey through the season with scripture, music, art and poetry. Here are

some of the special things we're doing to help us act in hope as we wait for the coming of Jesus Christ, the light of the world:

- Sunday worship

8:30 a.m. – Reflective Worship

Each week during Advent, we will be using art related to our Advent theme to lead us deeper into reflection and prayer throughout the season using the process of Visio Divina, holy seeing.

9:45 a.m. – Traditional Worship

There will be special music, a new banner, and theme-focused sermons to make this season a time of hope and action.

- Devotional Booklet – The "Until the Dawn" Advent/Christmas devotional will be available in the narthex. If you are unable to pick it up, please contact the church office and we'll make arrangements to get it to you.

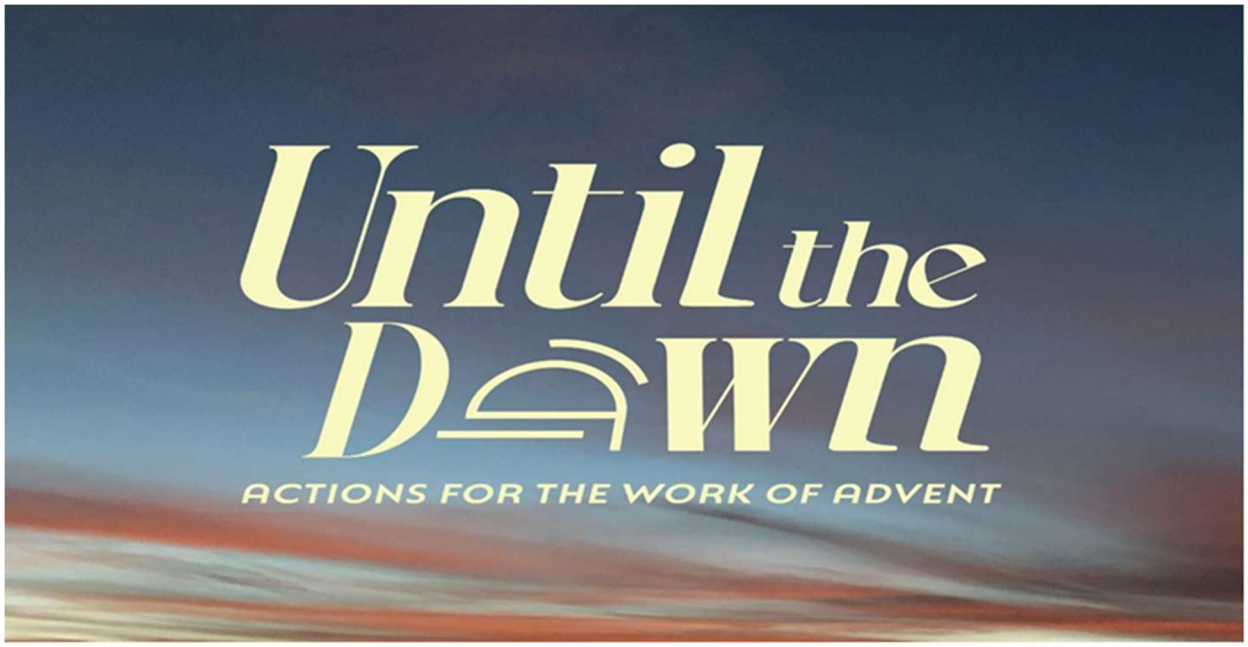
- Weekly Advent Study – Wednesday evenings on Zoom

This weekly discussion during Advent will use the "Until the Dawn" devotional for our study. Together we will reflect using scripture, poetry and art as we discover what actions God might be inviting us to during this season. Pam McShane will be the leader for this discussion We will meet at 7 p.m. on Zoom on Wednesdays December 2,9, 16and 23. Here is the Zoom link for this study:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84004337310?pwd=pbmnS86EM7Q0RpS63bbB5jOr5HFsX

The full Advent/Christmas schedule is available on the flyer below.

Just as surely as the sun rises, God's steadfast love and mercy are made new every morning. As we move toward the horizon, we will cry out, start somewhere, speak up, take courage, build up, and choose joy. These actions will help us resist despair and put our prayers in motion. Until the day when God's love reigns and all the earth echoes shalom, let us keep moving, singing, resisting, and rejoicing—trusting that God joins us in the work of Advent.



Advent/Christmas 2026 at Shenkel

Sunday worship - 8:30 Reflective Worship - Prayer and reflection on the art work

9:45 - Traditional Worship with seasonal music

Sunday, November 29th – "Cry Out"

Sunday, December 6th – "Start Somewhere"

Sunday, December 13th – "Speak Up"

Sunday, December 20th – "Take Courage"

Wednesdays at 7 p.m. - Advent Study on Zoom

Sunday, December 20th - Family-friendly worship with children's chorus

Monday, December 21st at 7 p.m. - "Liturgy for the Night" Longest Night Worship

Thursday, December 24th at 7 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Sunday, December 27th at 9 a.m. **(Note special time for worship!)** Breakfast Church - Potluck breakfast and informal worship around the tables in Fellowship Hall

STEWARDSHIP

- Join us **Thursdays at 11:00 AM in the Social Hall** for Qigong, led by our amazing teacher, Salil Gutt. Qigong's gentle movements have been used for centuries to improve health, reduce stress, and keep us in the present moment. Please wear comfortable clothing. The suggested fee is $12.00 per class payable by cash or check, but if that is prohibitive, pay what you are able. Adults only, please.

- Along with presenting interesting events to help people in the community know who we are, Stewardship is also tasked with coming up with fundraising ideas. If you know of anyone who needs a rental space for picnics, meetings, showers or birthday/anniversary parties, have them call the church office for information. Every little bit helps! And this has proven to be a very good moneymaker for our church.

- We're always looking for new ideas for our Speaker Series! Do you have a particular topic you'd like to explore? Know someone (community member, college professor, friend, to name a few) who could present a 1-to-2-hour program on a topic of interest? Please let anyone from Stewardship know your thoughts: Chris Gray, Dan Jenkins, Julie Zachesky, Kim Yocom, Mo or Tom Gallant, or Brenda Berriker.

LOCAL MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

- **COMMUNITY MEAL -** Shenkel folks are caring individuals who want to help those in need. We yearn to make a difference but sometimes don't know where to start. Here is an opportunity to show you care: The **4th Monday of each month**, a handful of our members help serve a **Community Lunch at Christ Episcopal in Pottstown**. Our church is an active participant in this local mission. Pastor Suzanne brings 70 salty and sweet snacks that are given out at lunch. These are purchased at Giant using the Giant gift cards that we also sell at church. These caring volunteers would love to welcome more helpers! You can serve lunch from 11:00 to 1:00 and/or go earlier around 9:00 AM to help sort food donations and prepare dessert trays. Don't worry—Shenkel is not responsible for the meal as we were years ago. We are simply willing helpers who are there to do whatever tasks need to be done.

REQUEST FOR ALL FACEBOOK USERS

Stewardship is working hard to put together interesting and timely speaker series events, but we may not be getting the word out. So, if you are on Facebook, please follow Shenkel UCC and look for any posts on upcoming events that Julie Zachesky has

so faithfully been creating and posting. Then share it on your own personal FB page. We need to reach as many people as we can, and this is an easy way for you to use social media to let people know about our events. BETTER YET: Personally invite your friends and neighbors—it works! Thank you for your help!

SHENKEL PRAYER GROUP

Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and celebrate the Spirit of God moving among us as we pray together. The group meets at **10:00 AM on the first Monday** of the month. All are welcome to participate!

CLUSTER NEEDS

NOVEMBER: pasta sauce and broth

DECEMBER: jelly and shelf stable fruit juice

YOCOM FAMILY LANDSCAPING FUND FOR THE GROVE

The times when volunteers were plentiful and eager to put their backs into taking care of our properties are long gone. This means we must pay for much of the work that needs to be done for upkeep and repairs. To address this need, the Yocom family has generously started a fund to pay for mowing and to maintain the grove and labyrinth. Please contribute as you are able!

GIANT AND REDNER'S GIFT CARDS

You're doing a great job! This is an easy way to raise money for our church. Purchase your cards Sunday mornings or in the Church Office Tuesday-Thursday, between 9:00 and 1:30. Thanks for doing your part!

ONLINE GIVING/QR CODE

It's easier than ever to catch up on your giving to support and sustain our church. Just go to www.shenkelucc.org, open up Online Giving, and choose where you want your donations to go. Simple! In addition, QR codes are in the pews and will be on the table in the grove for an easy, fast way of contributing. Thank you in advance for your continuing support of your church.

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee is tasked with supporting the Pastor as well as bringing to her any concerns of the congregation. Information discussed is confidential. Members are Dan Jenkins and Tootie Hine. Please feel free to discuss any joys or concerns you have with any member of this committee.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Cole Major	11/5/26
Louise Hine	11/6/26
Alex Mocarski	11/6/26
Joe Palubinsky	11/7/26
Homer Royer	11/8/26
Kaleena Sweinhart	11/8/26
Madeline Mest	11/15/26
John Sabo	11/16/26
Peter Wanner	11/17/26
Clair Faust	11/19/26
Ben Mocarski	11/21/26
Tracy Dise	11/25/26
AJ Foss	11/25/26
Linda Foss	11/28/26
Mindy Chidawu	11/30/26

NOVEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY

Nov 1
Julie and Bill Zachesky
Jesse Painter
Elizabeth, James, Zoey, Henry and Molly Carr
Tony Gulotta

Nov 8
Joel Sweinhart
Bill, Britnee, Olivia and Delia Sanseverino
David Klein
Connie Armbruster

Nov 15
Clayton, Katerina, Maxine, Bellamy and Rennick Brewer
Nicole, Scott, Tully and Buckley Meehan
Jim and Elaine Bevan
Carole Bailey

Nov 22
Joe and Joan Granger
Lucas Zachesky
Mike and Robin Martin
Lori Scharneck

Nov 29
Glen Bradley
Erika, Kyle, Giovanni and Christopher Manetti
Noah Bradley
David Phillips

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Isabelle Chidawu	12/4/26
Mari O'Drain	12/4/26
John Jonides	12/8/26
Abigail Dise	12/9/26
Analexis Foss	12/15/26
Judith Gergle	12/20/26
Betty Bortz	12/21/26
Bonnie Cox	12/21/26
Jim Faust	12/22/26
Josh Palubinsky	12/23/26
TJ Augustine III	12/24/26

DECEMBER PRAYER LOTTERY

Dec 6
Jennifer, Jeffrey, Hannah, Catherine and Audrey Dyott
Joe and Joan Palubinsky
Kim Yocom and Barry Peterman
Heather Burhans Tran

Dec 13
Donald Laverty
Tom and Maureen Gallant
Richard Golden
Barry and Susan Miller

Dec 20
Lynne and Cody Moyer
Stephanie Viti
Tesia Craner and Zane Kline
TJ Augustine

Dec 27
Gene and Nick Takach and Eric Croom
Michaela Craner
Rachel Berriker
John and Sharon Sabo

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Your Shenkel Happenings Editor,

Brenda Berriker